



2020 Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award Larry Williams '81, '84

Each year, Winthrop recognizes an alumnus for selfless dedication of time, energy and talent in service to others. The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award captures this high honor.

The 2020 recipient is Larry Williams '81, '84, who spent much of his career in the accounting industry and continues to champion financial education initiatives in his communities. Recently, he established the Begin Your Own Business (BYOB) Foundation to assist former offenders who want to become entrepreneurs and is currently publishing a book, "How to Survive the First Two Weeks of Principles of Financial Accounting."

Williams, a certified public accountant licensed in South Carolina and North Carolina, graduated magna cum laude from Winthrop University in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in accounting. He went on to obtain his MBA from Winthrop in 1984. He retired in 2018 as the director of finance and the chief diversity officer for the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority. Williams currently teaches accounting part time at Central Piedmont Community College and has taught part time for several other area colleges. He previously worked as vice president of finance and administration at Mitchell Community College, assistant controller at Winthrop University and as a state auditor for the State Budget and Control Board.

During his time as a Winthrop employee, Williams served as the staff representative for the Winthrop University Alumni Association and as co-chair of the Black Greek Alumni Reunion and the chair of the Black Alumni Reunion. He was instrumental in starting the student chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) through the College of Business Administration and hired several Winthrop students as interns in accounting and information technology while employed with the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority. Williams was featured in the spring 2003 Winthrop Magazine, "Finance Director Finds Satisfaction in Storytelling, Larry Williams '81," where his passion for Winthrop and work were highlighted.

A native of Camden, South Carolina, Williams is a member of a number of organizations including NABA, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., the African American Caucus of Mecklenburg County, and is a former member of the North Carolina Association of CPAs, the North Carolina Local Government Budget Association, and the International Association of Assembly Managers. He is a sought-after speaker for a number of cultural events and programs.

In addition to the scope of his accounting career, Williams has offered significant contributions to the literary world, having had poetry published in Cultural Calendar and Rolling Out magazines. He won the President's Prize in Poetry in 1981 for the best poem submitted in The Anthology, Winthrop University's literary magazine. Additionally, he won the faculty/staff writing award in 1990 and 1991 for his poetry published in Dimensions, the literary magazine of Mitchell Community College. Williams also published two books of poetry, "Sunny but Cloudy" in 1997 and "Now I Know" in 2002. And in 2000, Williams won second place in the Davidson County Writers' Guild Poetry Contest.



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The Charlotte Business Journal recognized him in 2005 as a Champion of Diversity for his work in advancing diversity and inclusion efforts in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he resides and is a member of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church.